

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

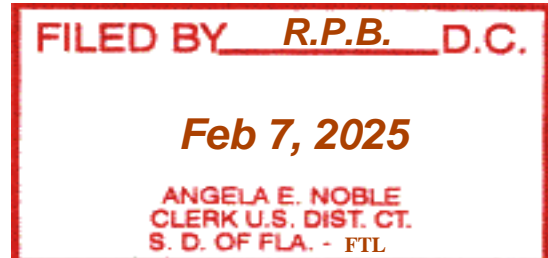
CASE NO. 25-MJ-6081-PMH

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

vs.

PAUL J. RIVERA,

Defendant.



**CRIMINAL COVER SHEET**

1. Did this matter originate from a matter pending in the Northern Region of the United States Attorney's Office prior to August 8, 2014 (Mag. Judge Shaniek M. Maynard)? NO.
2. Did this matter originate from a matter pending in the Central Region of the United States Attorney's Office prior to October 3, 2019 (Mag. Judge Jared M. Strauss)? NO.
3. Did this matter involve the participation of or consultation with now Magistrate Judge Eduardo I. Sanchez during his tenure at the U.S. Attorney's Office, which concluded on January 22, 2023? NO.
4. Did this matter involve the participation of or consultation with Magistrate Judge Marty Fulgueira Elfenbein during her tenure at the U.S. Attorney's Office, which concluded on March 5, 2024? NO.
5. Did this matter involve the participation of or consultation with Magistrate Judge Ellen F. D'Angelo during her tenure at the U.S. Attorney's Office, which concluded on October 7, 2024? NO.

Respectfully submitted,

HAYDEN P. O'BYRNE  
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

By: David A. Snider

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AO 91 (Rev. 11/11) Criminal Complaint

## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Southern District of Florida

FILED BY R.P.B. D.C.

Feb 7, 2025

ANGELA E. NOBLE  
CLERK U.S. DIST. CT.  
S. D. OF FLA. - FTLUnited States of America  
v.  
PAUL J. RIVERA

Case No. 25-MJ-6081-PMH

Defendant(s)

## CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of February 6, 2025 in the county of Broward in the  
Southern District of Florida, the defendant(s) violated:

<i>Code Section</i>	<i>Offense Description</i>
18 U.S.C. § 2113(a)	Bank Robbery

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.
  
 Complainant's signature

Sean Ward, Special Agent, FBI

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence. by FaceTime

Date: 02/07/2025
  
 Judge's signature
City and state: Fort Lauderdale, Florida

PATRICK M. HUNT, U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE

Printed name and title

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, Sean Ward, being duly sworn, depose and state as follows:

**INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND**

1. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) and have served in this capacity since July 2024. I am currently assigned to the Miami Field Office, Violent Crime and Fugitive Task Force. In that assignment, I investigate, violations of federal law, including bank robberies. I have received training in federal criminal statutes relating to this offense and others, as well as training on how to conduct investigations of this and other offenses.

2. I submit this affidavit in support of a criminal complaint against Paul J. Rivera (“RIVERA”). As explained below, there is probable cause to believe that on or about February 6, 2025, in Broward County, in the Southern District of Florida, RIVERA violated Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(a), that is, bank robbery.

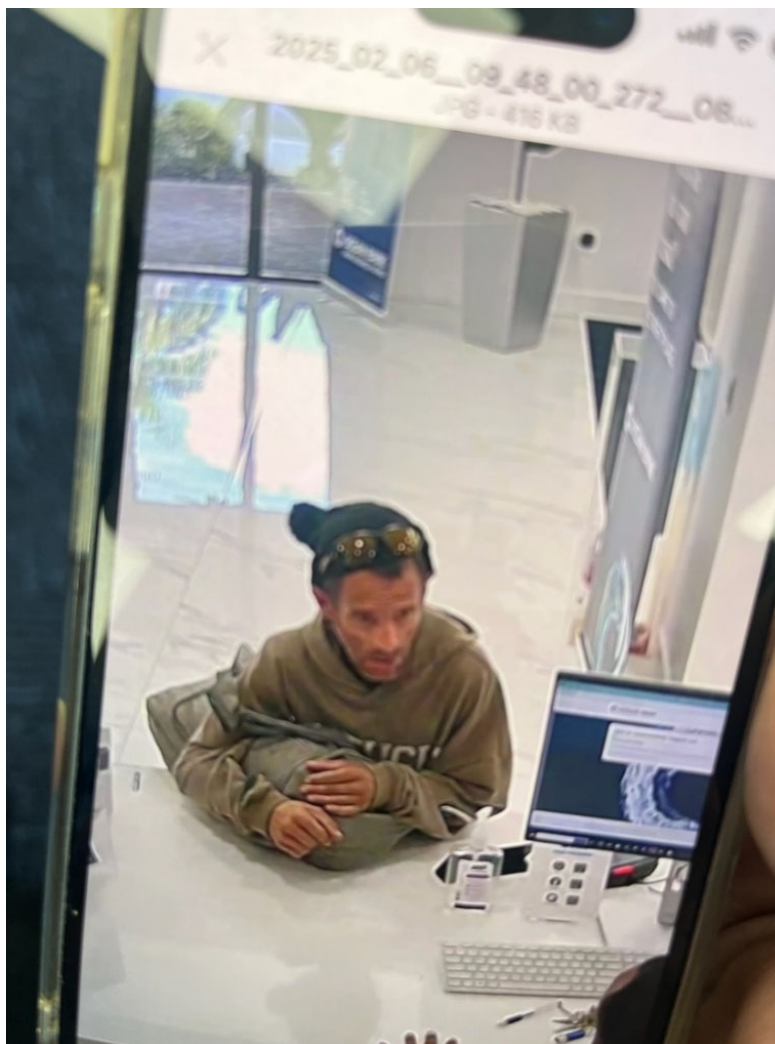
3. The facts contained in this Affidavit are based on my personal knowledge, as well as information relayed to me by other law enforcement officials involved in this investigation. I have not included in this affidavit every fact known to me about this investigation. Rather, I have included only the facts that are sufficient to establish probable for the issuance of a criminal complaint against RIVERA for the above-described criminal violation.

**PROBABLE CAUSE**

4. On February 6, 2025, at approximately 9:48 a.m., a white male later identified as RIVERA entered an Ocean Bank branch located at 100 North Federal Highway, Fort Lauderdale, Florida (the “Bank”). The Bank is insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

5. Upon entering the Bank, RIVERA approached a teller (“Victim Teller”) and placed a bag on the counter in front of Victim Teller and leaned in towards Victim Teller. According to

Victim Teller, whom law enforcement has since interviewed, RIVERA told Victim Teller to give RIVERA \$300 in \$100 dollar bills or he (RIVERA) would “blow up” himself and Victim Teller. RIVERA further stated to Victim Teller that RIVERA was “already dying” and that Victim Teller should not make any sudden movements. Victim Teller, who was then in fear for Victim Teller’s safety and the safety of others in the Bank, opened the drawer and took out \$300 in \$100 denominations. RIVERA took the currency and proceeded to walk out of the bank and turn towards the rear of the building. RIVERA is pictured below in a still frame from the Bank’s surveillance footage wearing a tan colored sweatshirt with white letters and a dark skull cap, with his arms around a bag on the counter in front of Victim Teller:



6. Shortly after the robbery, responding law enforcement officers went to a Miracle Leaf Health Center located at 719 E. Broward Blvd. in Fort Lauderdale to request surveillance video that law enforcement believed may have recorded RIVERA after the robbery. At that location, law enforcement spoke with a male (“Witness 1”) who stated that, earlier that morning, a man had approached Witness 1’s car while Witness 1 was stopped at a nearby intersection. According to Witness 1, the man offered Witness 1 \$100 to drive him to a motel on the corner of Stirling Road and US 1. Witness 1 stated that he initially refused, but ultimately agreed to drive the man to a gas station. Witness 1 provided a description of the man that matched the description of RIVERA as shown in the surveillance image. Witness 1 also stated that the man had a couple of hundred-dollar bills in his hand.

7. Thereafter, law enforcement learned that RIVERA had an encounter with a Broward Sheriff’s Office (BSO) Deputy Sheriff (“Deputy 1”) at Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood International Airport (“FLL”) earlier on February 6, 2025 (*i.e.*, before the robbery at the Bank). During that encounter, Deputy 1 interviewed RIVERA and gave him a trespassing warning.

8. In connection with the bank robbery investigation, Deputy 1 viewed a still image of the surveillance video from the Bank and confirmed that man in the image (RIVERA) was the person whom Deputy 1 had encountered earlier that day. Furthermore, Deputy 1’s body camera footage of the man Deputy 1 encountered (RIVERA) shows RIVERA to be wearing the same clothing that was worn by the person who robbed the Bank. A still image of Deputy 1’s body camera footage is inserted below:



9. Law enforcement recovered a short distance from the Bank a tan sweatshirt with white letters matching the one RIVERA was wearing in the Bank surveillance and body camera still frames.

10. At approximately 4:45 p.m. on February 6, 2025, Deputy 1 observed RIVERA at a bus stop at FLL and questioned why he had returned. In response, RIVERA uttered that he had “messed up” and that he had robbed a bank. RIVERA was then placed under arrest.

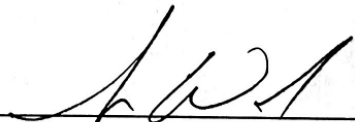


11. During a post-Miranda interview by FBI agents, RIVERA stated that he had committed the bank robbery and that he had done so because he was “down bad” and suffering from drug withdrawal. RIVERA further stated that, after the bank robbery, he went to the Deluxe Motel to find an individual known as “J.J.” (UNK 1) who could provide RIVERA with fentanyl. RIVERA could not locate UNK 1 but noticed a white female with sores (UNK 2) and approached her. UNK 2 took \$200 from RIVERA and provided him with fentanyl.

**CONCLUSION**

12. Based on facts set forth above, I respectfully submit that there is probable cause to believe that on or about February 6, 2025, in Broward County, in the Southern District of Florida, RIVERA committed a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(a), that is, bank robbery.

**FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NAUGHT.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sean Ward, Special Agent  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Attested to by the applicant in accordance with the requirements of Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 by FaceTime on this 7th day of February, 2025.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
PATRICK M. HUNT  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE